



# **The Medical Department: Medical Service in the European Theater of Operations (United States Army in World War II: The Technical Services)**

*Graham A. Cosmas, Albert E. Cowdrey*

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Although readily admitting the importance of combat service support forces, military students and historians alike tend to concentrate on combat and combat support units when studying operations, giving only passing attention to the vital work of the logisticians, signalmen, transport troops, and the rest. This is regrettable, for the operations of combat service support units—especially in a global conflict like World War II with its vast distances and varied terrains—have much to teach us about modern warfare, lessons that remain of surpassing importance to our profession. The Medical Department: Medical Service in the European Theater of Operations supports the proposition that the experience of medical personnel in war directly stimulates advances in medical science. More importantly, it demonstrates that the organization of health care in the combat zones, including evacuation of the wounded, control of disease among troops and civilian populations, and care of prisoners of war, contributed directly to the Allied victory. The exploits of the doctors, corpsmen, and medical support units provide a model for the planning and organization of medical support in today's Army. This volume continues a subseries begun in 1966 with the study of medical support of the Army in the Mediterranean Theater. The Center of Military History will soon complete this project with the publication of a similar study of the very different challenges faced by the Medical Department in the Pacific.

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